



Vedder Community

Pro Bono Year in Review 2024

VedderPrice

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A Message from Our Co-Chairs

Pro bono provides opportunities for all parties involved: to underserved clients, to not-for-profit organizations and charities, and to our own attorneys volunteering. Through this work, our shareholders and associates gain invaluable and insightful exposure to legal and societal challenges outside the realm of their everyday expertise.

Through partnerships with multiple, specialized organizations, Vedder Price is able to improve the quality of life for immigrants, students, military veterans and more. Our team approach brings together attorneys of all backgrounds and experience levels, calling for a shareholder to supervise associates on each project, frequently spanning multiple years.

We encourage our attorneys to seek pro bono work that they are passionate about, whether it be within or outside of their traditional practice. This unique approach has rendered important wins in 2024. Our lawyers in Dallas have advocated for the compassionate release of convicted and imprisoned individuals across the United States, while our Chicago team has helped low-income

individuals seal criminal records that stood in the way of employment and housing. These matters reflect our commitment to ensuring fairness and dignity for those who have been left behind by the legal system.

Beyond the courtroom, our teams quietly support organizations working at the heart of social change. In London, we advised an organization dedicated to promoting equality for those with facial differences and disfigurements. Our Los Angeles office has supported nonprofits advancing youth education and immigrant rights. Several of our offices have dedicated their time and resources to organizations advocating for victims of human trafficking. These partnerships may not generate headlines, but they strengthen the infrastructure behind vital community services.

At Vedder Price, our pro bono clients receive the same level of dedication, support and service as any paying client. Through pro bono legal services and our additional donations of volunteer time and financial resources, we have the privilege of supporting communities across the globe.



Michelle T. Olson

Shareholder and Co-Chair
Pro Bono Committee



Patrick W. Spangler

Shareholder and Co-Chair
Pro Bono Committee

Pro Bono: By the Numbers

As part of our professional obligation, attorneys at Vedder Price are encouraged to provide pro bono legal services. Here's a quick overview of our firm's commitment by the numbers.



\$6+ million

Estimated value of pro bono services provided by Vedder Price in 2024, reflecting our dedication to serving those in need



9,300+ hours

Time donated by our attorneys, demonstrating our commitment to making a difference



53%

Percentage of lawyers who participated in pro bono work, highlighting our firm's collective dedication



32%

Percentage of associates who donated at least 30 pro bono hours, showcasing widespread engagement

Standing Up for Survivors of Human Trafficking

*Interview with **Anand Ramana**, Shareholder*

“One of the big trafficking issues in the Washington, DC metropolitan area occurs when ambassadors bring people from their home countries to serve as domestic workers and nannies,” explained Anand Ramana, a Vedder Shareholder based in Washington, DC. “After they get here, domestic servants can be underpaid and overworked, which violates U.S. labor laws.”

The Human Trafficking Legal Center, which provides pro bono counsel to survivors of trafficking, asked Vedder Price to take on a case involving a Namibian woman employed at the home of a Namibian diplomat family residing in a suburb outside Washington, DC.

The client whom Anand and Ariel Kelly, a Vedder Associate in Chicago, have been representing pro bono for several years is a woman who was allegedly underpaid and denied access to her passport by a diplomat from Namibia and her accountant husband who employed her at their home in Silver Spring, Maryland, from 2007 through 2011.

“They promised her \$3,000 a month to work as a nanny to their newborn child for 40-50 hours a week, with a couple weeks of paid vacation,” Anand said. “But they worked her 18 hours a day, seven days a week. She slept with their baby. They paid her a little bit, but it amounted to roughly \$500 a month, which works out to about 30 cents an hour.”

She served the family until the couple departed in 2011 for a diplomatic assignment at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. The couple finally returned her passport, which had a visa restricting the type of jobs she legally could apply for, and left her on her own to support herself. By this time, she had spoken to other nannies in the area, learned she had been severely underpaid and sought assistance from charitable organizations.

By the time a civil lawsuit was filed, the diplomat couple was residing in Europe. “It took forever for us to get this couple served in Switzerland,” Anand said. “We also served the Republic of Namibia because it benefited from the trafficking and knew about it. It took about a year and a half to get everyone served. The U.S. State Department was extremely helpful.”

“They paid her a little bit, but it amounted to roughly \$500 a month, which works out to about 30 cents an hour.”

After a round of motions to dismiss, the U.S. District Court in Maryland, citing sovereign immunity, dismissed the Republic of Namibia from the suit. But the court denied diplomatic immunity to the couple. “That was an important ruling to combat human trafficking in this country,” Anand explained.

For the discovery phase, which started in 2022 and continued into early 2025, Ramana flew to London to depose the couple. “I took their depositions which, if this ever goes to trial, will be very interesting,” he said. Last summer, the U.S. government granted our client a T Visa, a special U.S. residency permit for victims of modern slavery, which adds credibility to her claims in court.

Ramana estimates he has logged several hundred hours on this case since 2021. Ariel has helped and has contributed many hours too.

The diplomat couple has denied all allegations, according to a report published December 22, 2024, in *The Namibian*. If the case goes to trial, the publicity could become a career liability for the diplomat.

“I can’t imagine the Republic of Namibia wanting to read about its diplomats being accused of human trafficking,” Ramana said. “I’m shocked it hasn’t reached out to us to settle.”

A Heavy Lift: Seeking Compassionate Release for Prisoners

Interview with Arianna Goodman, Shareholder

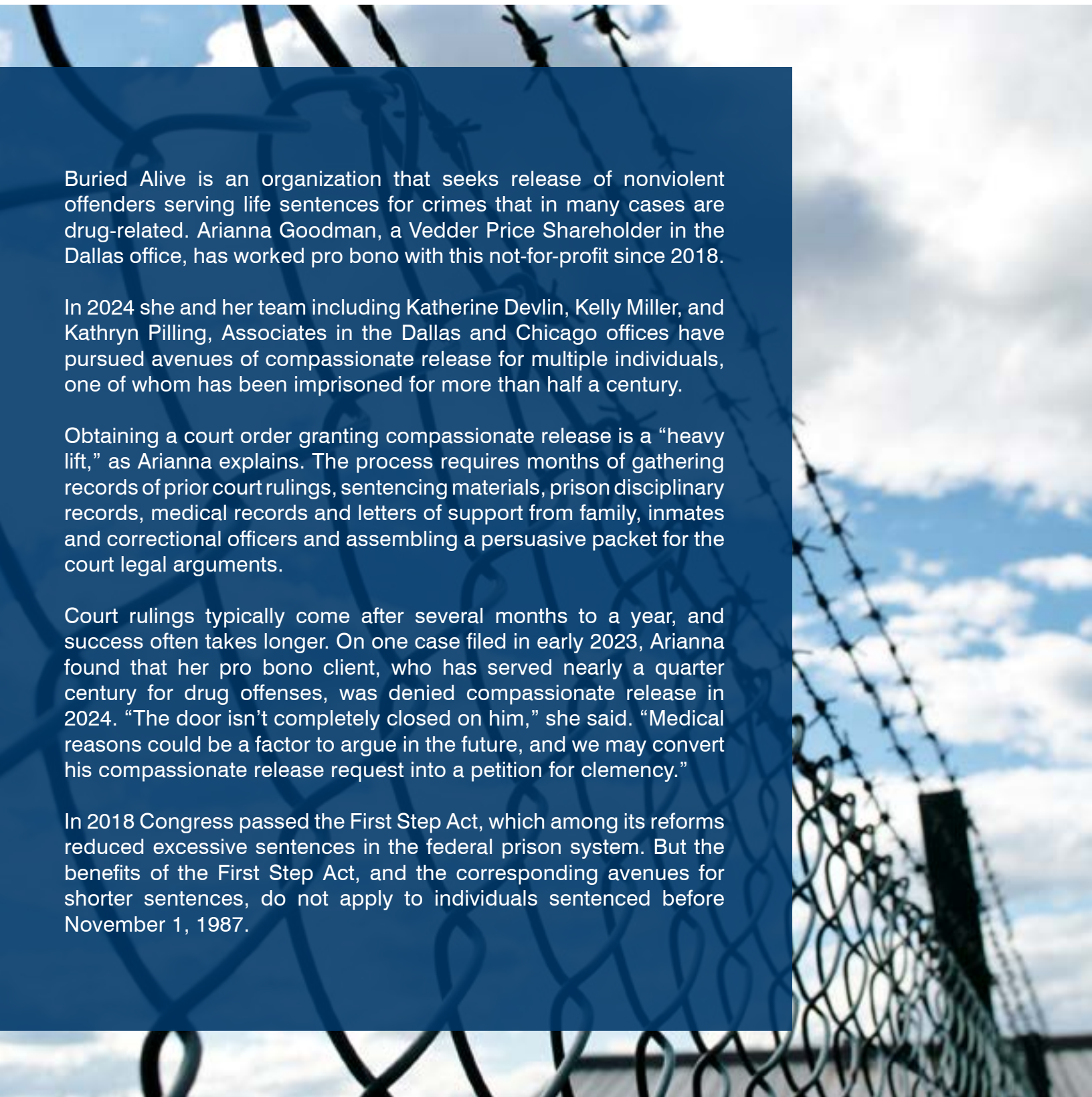
Buried Alive is an organization that seeks release of nonviolent offenders serving life sentences for crimes that in many cases are drug-related. Arianna Goodman, a Vedder Price Shareholder in the Dallas office, has worked pro bono with this not-for-profit since 2018.

In 2024 she and her team including Katherine Devlin, Kelly Miller, and Kathryn Pilling, Associates in the Dallas and Chicago offices have pursued avenues of compassionate release for multiple individuals, one of whom has been imprisoned for more than half a century.

Obtaining a court order granting compassionate release is a “heavy lift,” as Arianna explains. The process requires months of gathering records of prior court rulings, sentencing materials, prison disciplinary records, medical records and letters of support from family, inmates and correctional officers and assembling a persuasive packet for the court legal arguments.

Court rulings typically come after several months to a year, and success often takes longer. On one case filed in early 2023, Arianna found that her pro bono client, who has served nearly a quarter century for drug offenses, was denied compassionate release in 2024. “The door isn’t completely closed on him,” she said. “Medical reasons could be a factor to argue in the future, and we may convert his compassionate release request into a petition for clemency.”

In 2018 Congress passed the First Step Act, which among its reforms reduced excessive sentences in the federal prison system. But the benefits of the First Step Act, and the corresponding avenues for shorter sentences, do not apply to individuals sentenced before November 1, 1987.

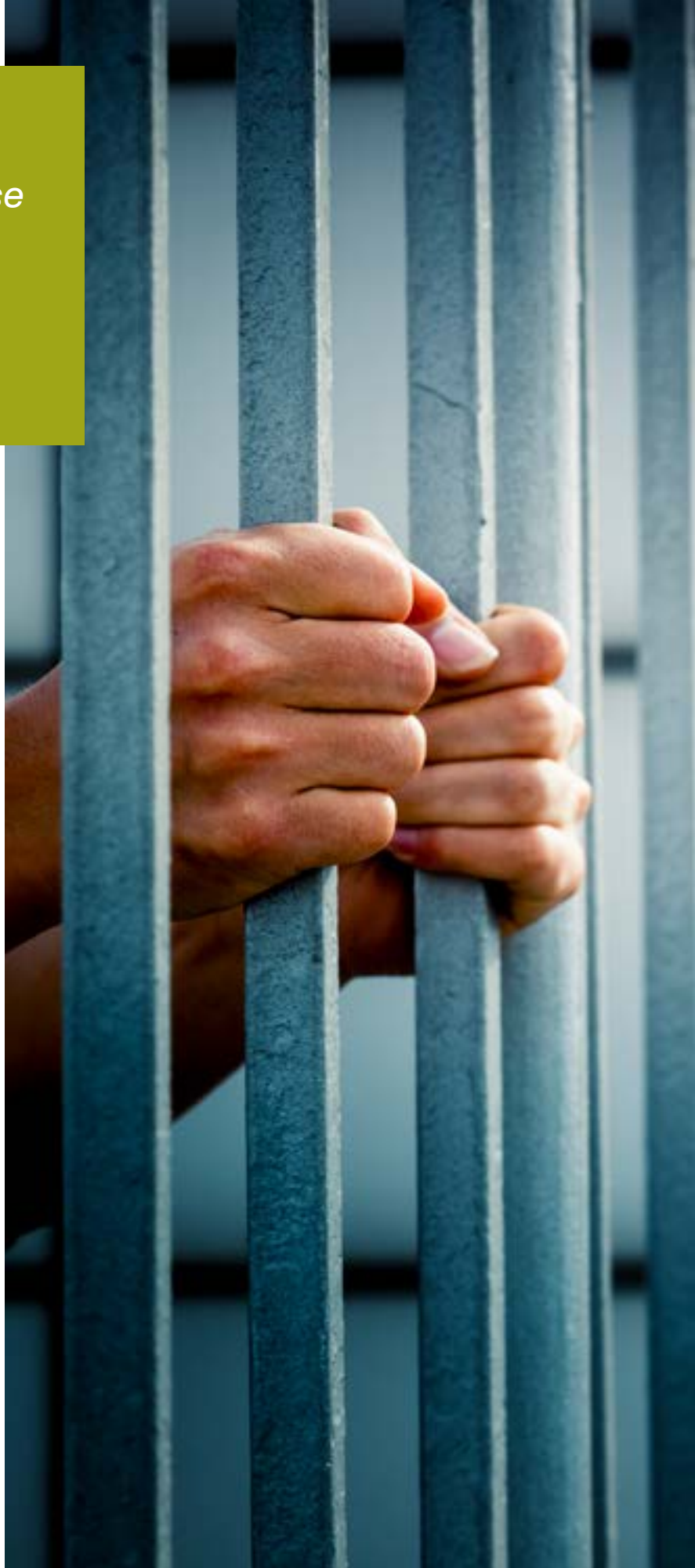


“Obtaining a court order granting compassionate release is a ‘heavy lift’ ... the process requires months of gathering records.”

In November 2024, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit denied an appeal for compassionate release for Vedder Price client (serving a 42.5-year sentence). This case involved whether nonretroactive changes in sentencing laws could be considered “extraordinary and compelling reasons” warranting a sentence reduction under the compassionate release statute. The court held that they did not.

Despite this setback for advocates of Buried Alive, Arianna and her team members continue to pursue every possible avenue. “We communicate regularly with our clients, their families and other supporters,” she said. “We explain this is a long process, help to manage expectations and not lose hope. You never know which arguments are going to persuade a judge, or if opposing counsel is going to see that spending 30 or 50 years in prison is finally enough.”

“It’s honestly shocking how our clients and their families stay in good spirits. They know it’s a long shot, but they’re not in this alone. We’re with them every step of the way.”





Operation Blooming Onion

Interview with **Charlie Wang, Associate**

Several federal agencies have collaborated on the multi-year “Operation Blooming Onion” investigation, which uncovered a huge human smuggling and labor trafficking ring that lured Mexican and Central American workers into brutal conditions at farms in the United States.

Charlie Wang, an Associate in the Los Angeles office, said Vedder Price became involved after the Georgia Legal Services Program, a nonprofit law firm, asked for assistance filing civil claims. A team of Vedder Price attorneys has been working pro bono, filing cases against different groups of the alleged traffickers, ever since.

Progress in civil cases has been slow due to the pace of proceedings in the criminal court. “As the criminal action is ongoing, we haven’t been able to get all the documents needed,” Charlie explained. “But we continue to reach out to individuals who were harmed.”

On the criminal side, two dozen defendants have been indicted. A 63-year-old Georgia woman considered to be the ringleader was sentenced February 10, 2025 to 12 months and one day in prison, along with being required to provide more than \$300,000 in restitution to victims.

Investigators from Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of Labor, the FBI and other federal agencies have been investigating the organization since 2018, a few years after the trafficking is believed to have begun. The traffickers fraudulently obtained H-2A visas, which are intended for temporary laborers, thereby enabling transport of migrants to U.S. farms.

Laborers were trapped in dangerous working conditions and received no or little pay (e.g., 20 cents for a bucket of onions harvested by hand). Their identification documents were withheld, housing was squalid and laborers were threatened with physical violence and deportation.



A civil case was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia against several individuals and an incorporated farm business. Violations cited in the civil complaint relate to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the federal Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act, as well as multiple Georgia statutory and common laws.

“In 2024 the court permitted us to broaden the class,” Charlie said, “so we have been getting contact information for about 80 other individuals affected.” He credited Fernanda Contreras, a Vedder Price Associate in Chicago, for overseeing client outreach, vetting declarations and helping collect documents needed to present a strong case.

Vedder Price is seeking liquidated damages for plaintiffs, along with trebled damages, general and special damages, punitive damages, emotional-distress damages, damages arising from the traffickers’ breach of contract and disgorgement of ill-gotten gains, as well as pre- and post-judgment interest, costs and reasonable attorneys’ fees.

Vedder Price has been coordinating efforts with Dan Werner, a partner at Radford Scott, LLP, and former Deputy Legal Director of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Earlier in his career Werner worked as an attorney with Farmworker Legal Services of New York, Inc.

Every Student Deserves an Enriching Summer Experience

Interview with Amy Bess, Shareholder

“Summertime and the livin’ is easy” is the opening lyric to the beloved Gershwin song. But for young people, personal and academic growth can decline in summer due to isolation, and lack of opportunity, resulting in boredom and depression.

Change Summer is a not-for-profit that provides students from under-resourced communities with fresh-air camp experiences that can boost curiosity, confidence, responsibility and psychosocial development. School districts, including a number of large charter school networks, identify students who will benefit from a summer camp experience, and each district covers a portion of the tuition.

Amy Bess, a Vedder Price Shareholder based in the Washington, DC office, became involved with the organization after Josh Phillips, the then-Chief Operating Officer of one of her longtime clients—a charter school network called Uncommon Schools—sought to expand Uncommon’s offerings into summer camp experiences for his students. Bess volunteered her legal services to Change Summer starting in 2018.

“My practice is employment law,” Bess explains, “so we’ve helped Change Summer establish policies and create an employee handbook. I also help the organization navigate challenging workplace situations involving camp staffers during summer camp season.”

In addition, Vedder Price has provided a diverse range of legal, real estate and compliance support, such as drawing up contracts between Change Summer and partnering school districts; identification of potential sites, such as college campuses unused during summer months; drafting and negotiating real estate contracts and compliance agreements; and providing intellectual property support to license camp names and program materials. Vedder Price attorneys who helped Bess deliver pro bono services to Change Summer in 2024 include Ben Williams, John Burke, Alexa Zelmanowicz, Lisa Cardone, Andrew Falevich and Sara DeBlaze.

Phillips, now the Chief Executive Officer of Change Summer, has worked to expand the number of summer camps it operates annually from Change Summer’s one original camp (Camp Uncommon) to more than five camps annually in the Northeast and Midwest.

“It’s been rewarding to have helped this fantastic organization resolve legal and regulatory challenges so they can continue providing rewarding summertime experiences for kids,” Amy says. “Change Summer is a gift that keeps on giving.”

Asylum for a Journalist Targeted by the Taliban

*Interview with **Mark Ditto**, Shareholder*

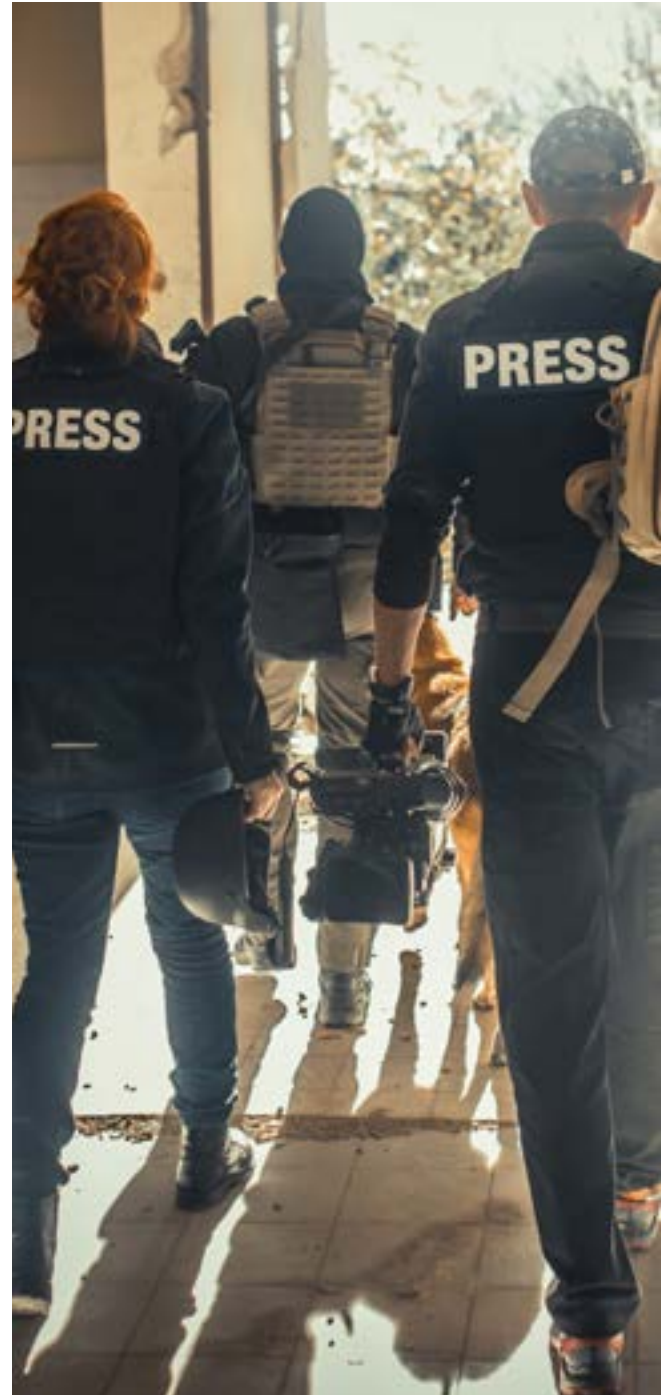
Journalists have been detained, beaten and even killed while covering conflicts and protests in Afghanistan. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, an international organization dedicated to defending press freedom worldwide, more than 50 journalists have been killed since 1992.

Vedder Price has represented one of the journalists in peril. The Taliban perceived his reporting as unfavorable, and shortly after the group took control of the country, the journalist received a letter stating that the Taliban planned to arrest him. Members of the new regime also phoned him repeatedly to say his location was being tracked, which raised fears for his safety and that of his family.

The family fled over the border into Pakistan and eventually sought asylum in the United States. Vedder Price, working in conjunction with the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), a not-for-profit organization based in Chicago, agreed to take on the journalist's case pro bono in November 2023.

Over 13 months, the Vedder Price team worked diligently to conduct interviews, collect statements, file documents and represent the family in Immigration Court. Members of the team included Maureen Miller, Mike Mulcahy and Zackary Harris. They were supported by Chitra Siwlal-Jaipersaud, Carli Norris and Katie Duncan. Mary Donohue also was among the initial team.

On December 9, 2024, our client was granted asylum. America historically has offered many refugees safety and an opportunity to pursue happiness that unfortunately can be lacking in their home countries. Shareholder Mark Ditto, who acts as the liaison between Vedder Price and the NIJC and has worked on pro bono asylum matters for nearly 15 years, finds that “[h]elping oppressed and disadvantaged people come to America legally and find a better way of life is extremely gratifying.”



Turning the Page— Legal Aid Chicago

Eligibility for employment, social services and housing are frequently constricted—if not blocked—by an arrest or a criminal conviction. For those living in poverty, Legal Aid Chicago (LAC) provides free services to help people become less burdened by their past mistakes.

In 2024, the Vedder team supported Legal Aid Chicago by helping to organize two expungement clinics—one in July, one in October—with attorneys from Vedder volunteering to prepare petitions for roughly two dozen individuals. “This work helps people petition the courts to expunge and seal those records so that they can turn the page in their lives and get jobs without the obstacle of a criminal record.”



A 2020 study by the Heartland Alliance reported that over the prior 40 years, 365,069 people had been convicted of drug-related crimes in Illinois. In many instances, an infraction committed decades ago might now be considered minor or even legal (e.g., cannabis usage). Sealing or expunging those records can give people a second chance at life. Expungement clinics are also helpful to counter past racial bias. Black people, for example, account for under 14 percent of Illinois’s adult population yet represent 28.9 percent of the population with a criminal record.

Barbara Bertini, LAC Director of Pro Bono & Community Partnerships, periodically sends over a set of files on individuals with arrest and conviction records, and the Vedder team organize a “clinic” to distribute applications and provide guidance.

“At our July clinic, we involved many junior associates,” shared a member of the team. “It’s very rewarding to have direct contact with somebody you’re helping. They’re on the phone with clients, talking to them about what happened and picking up relevant facts to present in the most advantageous way to the court.”

Facing Discrimination—Literally and Figuratively

*Interview with **Rachel Easton, Associate,** and **Henrietta Worthington, Associate***

Bullying, mistreatment and discrimination are common issues among people with facial differences. In 2024 Vedder's London office began offering pro bono services to a UK-based charity, Face Equality International, which raises awareness of the barriers and discrimination faced by people with facial differences.

As stated on the organization's website, "most people with disfigurements, along with their parents, are resigned to consistent failure from systems surrounding them, be it government, media or healthcare." In addition, many governments fail to extend protections under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Vedder Price is in the early stages of assisting Face Equality develop its lunch-and-learn sessions, in which trainers gather to learn and spread the word on ways businesses can realize the untapped value of people with facial differences and promote inclusive practices in the workplace. Trainers then go on to train other organizations to scale up awareness.

Face Equality is building an international alliance of charities dealing with this issue. She also states, "They are doing important work raising awareness of this as a human-rights issue."

Rachel Easton adds that the lunch-and-learn sessions provide "an opportunity for businesses to learn about facial equality, what that means in the workplace and what employers can do to help reduce the stigma and discrimination."



Breaking Barriers to Employment— *Safer Foundation*

Interview with **Michelle Olson**, Shareholder



In the past, it was extremely difficult for people with criminal histories to find employment after serving time. While it is still challenging, Illinois law makes it harder to discriminate unfairly against job seekers.

For more than half a century, Safer Foundation has helped pave the path to successful reentry.

Safer offers job placement, training and education, reentry support and wellness services. Safer has several locations in the greater Chicago area and in Davenport, Iowa, and the not-for-profit also advocates for state and federal legislation to reduce recidivism.

On a pro bono basis, Vedder Price provides ongoing support to Safer Foundation in employment matters. “Last year, we provided advice to Safer on changes to employment laws and what they mean for the organization,” noted Michelle Olson, Chicago Shareholder and Co-Chair of the firm’s Pro Bono Committee. Michelle has provided pro bono service to Safer for several years.

Management and labor are often seen as adversaries, but in most cases the two sides can reach agreement. “Those interests can be aligned and it’s a matter of working through the situation practically to come to the best resolution,” Michelle says.

What she finds especially rewarding is working with the Safer professionals in human resources. “They are really committed to the mission of the organization. They try to find the best solutions for Safer and the people who work there. Their decisions are made with empathy and understanding for the needs of both Safer and its employees.”

Safer offers job placement, training and education, reentry support and wellness services.

Empowerment Through Employment–Cara Collective

Interview with Patrick Spangler, Shareholder

Another social service agency that seeks to break the cycle of poverty through the power of employment is Cara Collective. The not-for-profit's Clean Slate program, for example, helps low-income participants learn skills, find gainful employment and build work history.

The Vedder Price team offering volunteer services to Cara in 2024 included Patrick Spangler and Michelle Olson, Co-Chairs of the Vedder Pro Bono Committee, and Ariel Kelly and Mike Considine, two Associates in the Chicago office.

“We act as an outside pro bono general counsel, advising them on compliance, corporate governance and real estate matters,” Patrick said.

In the previous year, Vedder Price helped Cara with a complex real estate acquisition and, in 2024, provided support for another real estate matter.

“Many of our pro bono team members believe in the power of employment to help people escape the cycle of poverty and to lead fulfilling lives. In this respect, Cara has been a great partner for our program and we appreciate the opportunity to contribute to Cara’s mission.”



Dankeschön for DANK Haus

*Interview with **Mark Svalina**, Shareholder*

In the early 20th century, nearly 25 percent of Chicago's population was composed of German immigrants or people of German descent. The cultural influence continues today in the city's Lincoln Square neighborhood, which is home to DANK Haus German American Cultural Center, a not-for-profit cultural organization.

Some people think DANK is a shortened version of danke (thank you in German), but it's an acronym for Deutsch Amerikanischer National Kongres (German-American National Congress). DANK Haus was formed in 1959 during the Cold War era, and the organization moved to its current location in 1967.

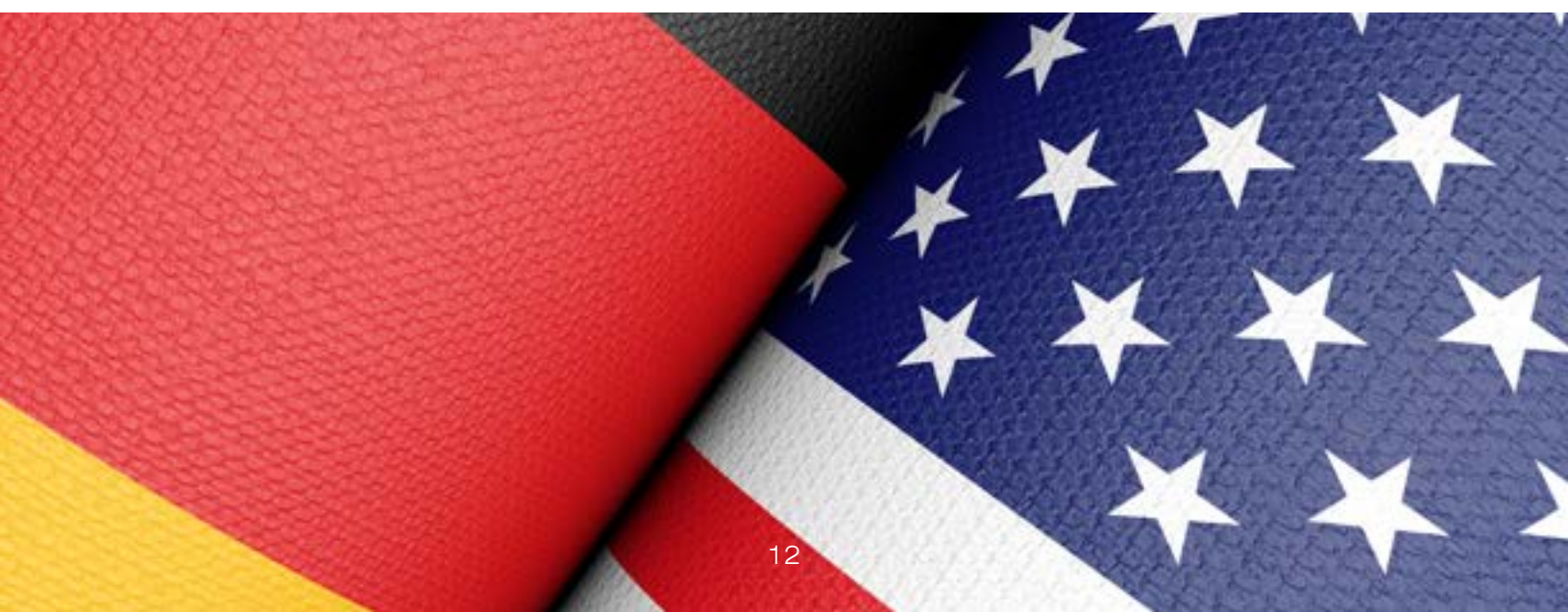
Mark Svalina is a Vedder Price Shareholder in Chicago and Dallas offices who once served on the Dank Haus Board of Directors. He and Associates Ryan Butler and Kelly Miller assisted DANK Haus in reviewing and drafting documents related to tax increment financing of \$1.56 million.

The city-backed financing was essential to fund a \$2.5 million upgrade of the organization's six-story building, designed a century ago by architect Paul Gerhardt. Massive work was needed to bring the building's plumbing up to date and make the building accessible to people with disabilities.

In his several years of involvement with DANK Haus, Mark has been fascinated by the organization's history, founded by a group of immigrant parents who were interested in continuing to share their heritage with their children.

DANK Haus's mission is to preserve and promote German American culture, heritage and language through its museum, art gallery, library, language school and school. It also offers language programs for all ages (over 290 students, adults and children), a full-time preschool and kindergarten, and arts and culture events. It embraces cross-cultural collaborations and partnerships to provide services to the community across all ages, ethnicities and creeds. DANK Haus has also recently launched a modular intercultural class for corporations that work with businesses in Germany to help employees understand the German culture and ways of working and to learn basic German vocabulary.

Dank Haus is not only a German cultural organization, but it also offers venue rentals for special events such as weddings, fundraisers and corporate functions, which provide revenue to help support its mission. The building has a marble lobby, gilt plaster frieze in the ballroom and skyline views of the city from the rooftop.



Helping Lawyers Defend Clients Against Defamation Claims

Interview with **Blaine Kimrey** and **Bryan Clark**, Shareholders

In the current political climate, defamation lawsuits against journalist have become increasingly common and extremely costly. These sorts of lawsuits—especially from billionaire plaintiffs with seemingly endless resources—imperil media organizations, particularly small publishers exercising their First Amendment rights. To help fight back, the Privacy, CyberSecurity and Media group at Vedder Price has teamed up with the Media Law Resource Center (MLRC) to provide a detailed update to the organization's *Actual Malice Practice Guide* that will help media defendants protect their First Amendment rights.

The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision in 1964, *New York Times v. Sullivan*, set a standard for demonstrating "actual malice," requiring a plaintiff to prove knowledge of falsity or reckless disregard for the truth to prevail on a defamation claim against a public figure. The landmark ruling, however, has been under attack in recent years.

Consequently, media organizations need support from attorneys highly knowledgeable about the best arguments to defend their work. Blaine Kimrey and Bryan Clark, both Vedder Price Shareholders based in Chicago, assembled a team of more than a dozen attorneys from multiple offices to help update the practice guide for the first time in 18 years. The initial guide was released in 2006.

What emerged from Vedder Price's pro bono update is a 70-page guide organized into 35 sections. Most of the sections focus on specific issues (e.g., failure to consult with the plaintiff before publication, reliance on confidential sources) that were addressed in cases and the weight that judges gave to those arguments.

In December, Kimrey and Clark gave an online presentation for MLRC leaders and members, previewing the content of the updated guide. "We've tried to capture every type of case, with the most significant elements, so you can be well equipped to go into battle," Clark told the group.

The MLRC is a nonprofit association for members of the media and their defense lawyers. The new guide provides relevant quotations, including those tracking with the historical understanding of actual malice, and more recent cases that might indicate a shifting legal terrain.

In addition to team leads Kimrey and Clark, the guide was written by the following Vedder Price attorneys volunteering their time: Jeanah Park, Courtney Brown, Marie Christiansen, Stephanie David, Kate Jungers, Keeley Hanchon, Erica Schuman and Francisca Wolfenson Chimenelli.

"We firmly believe in the importance of the Fourth Estate," Kimrey said, noting that both he and Clark worked as newspaper reporters early in their careers. "When you have deadlines and you're working on a shoestring budget, you can't always get everything perfect despite doing your absolute best. And that's why the actual malice standard is so important."

Travalyst Flies High After Five Years

*Interview with **Henrietta Worthington**, Associate*

Travalyst, which promotes sustainability in travel, is receiving growing global recognition for its efforts. Founded in 2019 by Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, the organization's international coalition includes brands such as Amadeus, Booking.com, Expedia, Google, Mastercard, Sabre, Skyscanner, Travelport, Trip.com, Tripadvisor and Visa.

Henrietta Worthington, a Solicitor in the London office, along with attorneys in Vedder's U.S. offices, provides ongoing legal support to Travalyst in multiple areas: negotiating agreements, providing regulatory updates and advising on employment law, competition rules and intellectual-property matters. Because it has grown into a relatively large not-for-profit, Travalyst pays reduced fees ("low bono") rather than receiving services free of charge.

Brian McCalmon, a Shareholder in the DC office, has helped advise Travalyst on antitrust risks, including providing antitrust training, and Daniel Shulman, a Shareholder in Chicago, has provided guidance on intellectual property and licensing.

Travalyst celebrated its fifth anniversary in 2024 and expanded its profile by participating in two major events: Climate Week NYC in September and the inaugural Tourism Day at the COP29 summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November. Additionally, Travalyst has also been increasingly involved with European policymakers as a trusted independent organization aiming to deliver action at scale.

Over the last five years, Travalyst has achieved some truly remarkable things, including getting reliable sustainability information in the hands of millions of travelers worldwide:

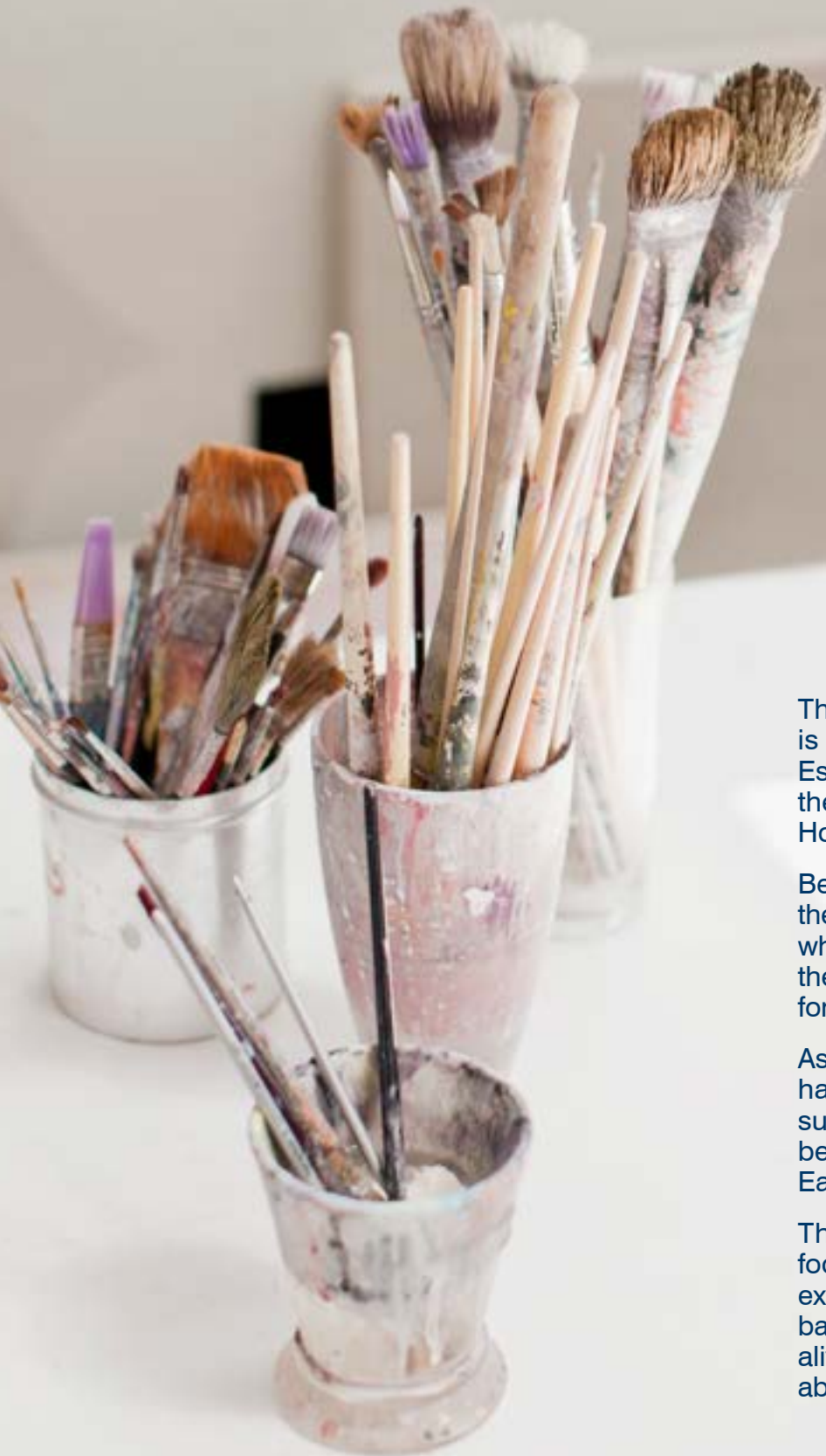
- Flight emissions information has been displayed by Travalyst partners in 130 billion searches globally, empowering travelers to make more informed choices.
- Google and Booking.com both display certifications that are aligned to Travalyst criteria. This drives consistency in the information presented to travelers and gives global visibility to accommodation providers of all shapes and sizes.

"Travalyst has an exciting and admirable mission and it's been rewarding for us to support them to grow and achieve their goals," Worthington said.



Gallery Nurtures the Artistic Spirit

Interview with Rachel Easton, Associate



The unique and innovative Bethlem Gallery is an independent art studio and gallery. Established in 1997, the gallery is situated on the spacious grounds of the Bethlem Royal Hospital in Beckenham, London.

Bethlem Gallery is free and open to all, and the organization maintains an [online presence](#) where art can be purchased. Proceeds go to the artists, with a small percentage reserved for the gallery to support operations.

Associates Rachel Easton and Daniel Stander have provided pro bono employment-law support to the organization. “It continues to be a privilege to support the work they do,” Easton said.

The gallery nurtures a supportive, artist-focused environment. As one Bethlem artist explained, “Counselling is ok and will get you back on the streets. But what keeps your mind alive is what you learn here. That’s what it’s about—keeping your spirit alive.”

People with Disabilities Aspire to Better Opportunities

*Interview with **Patrick Spangler**, Shareholder*

Aspire is a social services organization that helps people with disabilities explore new possibilities in learning, working and living. The not-for-profit is headquartered in Hillside, Illinois and has locations across the greater Chicago area.

On its website, the organization notes that 80 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed, and 85 percent live in poverty—big reasons why Aspire offers training, employment support and job.

Educational programs include life enrichment, behavioral therapy and life coaching, and Aspire also offers housing in the form of community homes and independent living.

Patrick Spangler, a Chicago Shareholder and Co-Chair of the Vedder Price Pro Bono Committee, serves on Aspire's Board of Directors. In 2024 he led a team of attorneys to support Aspire in numerous ways. On an ongoing basis, Vedder Price provides advice on labor, employment and corporate governance matters.

"We continue to value our partnership with Aspire and appreciate the opportunity to contribute to Aspire's mission of providing support to the disabled community in the Chicagoland area," Patrick said. Zachary Watters and Peyton Demith were among the Associates in Vedder's Chicago office who helped provide pro bono support to Aspire in 2024.



Pro Bono Awards: Congratulations!

In each calendar year, Vedder Price allows associates to receive up to 100 hours of chargeable credit, and shareholders up to 75 hours, for pro bono work. Vedder Price tracks the hours our people spend on pro bono service and congratulates the office and individuals devoting the most time to pro bono.

Top Firmwide Winners

- Shareholder—Anand Ramana, Washington, DC
- Associate—Rachel Easton, London
- Paralegal—Julie O’Keefe, Chicago
- Office—San Francisco

Top Office Winners

CHICAGO

- Shareholder—Bryan K. Clark
- Associate—Sudip K. Mitra

DALLAS

- Shareholder—Mark C. Svalina
- Associate—Kelly L. Miller

LONDON

- Associate—Henrietta Worthington

LOS ANGELES

- Shareholder—Eric R. McDonough
- Associate—Charlie Y. Wang

NEW YORK

- Shareholder—Joshua A. Dunn
- Associate—Stephanie G. David

SAN FRANCISCO

- Shareholder—Cheryl A. Sabnis
- Associate—Peter D. Walrod

WASHINGTON, DC

- Shareholder—Amy L. Bess
- Associate—Elisa Cardano Perez



**PRO BONO
SPIRIT AWARD**
Arianna Goodman, Dallas



OFFICE AWARD
San Francisco

67% of attorneys completed **30+** hour goal

Of all Vedder Price offices, San Francisco office had the highest percentage of attorneys who completed 30 or more hours of pro bono work in 2024.

Thanks to Our Partner Organizations

Vedder Price's pro bono efforts are strengthened through partnerships with not-for-profit organizations responding to a diverse range of needs. Our pro bono partners provide critical services to communities with diverse ethnic roots and levels of income.

Our Pro Bono Committee selects pro bono service partners based on attorney interest and community need.

In the United Kingdom, Vedder Price frequently works with LawWorks, a charity in England and Wales that connects people in need with volunteer lawyers and not-for-profit organizations.

In the United States, Public Counsel is the nation's largest pro bono firm and is another organization with which Vedder Price collaborates.

Vedder Price uses the Paladin online platform to connect attorneys with pro bono opportunities. Paladin enables law firms, companies and law schools to source projects, manage pro bono work, and streamline tracking and outcome reporting.

In addition to the organizations mentioned above, Vedder Price provides pro bono services to many other organizations, including but not limited to those below.



VedderCares

Charitable Competitions—Blending lighthearted competitions with charitable causes is a great way to have fun while raising money for nonprofit organizations. Below are a few highlights from our 2024 endeavors:

Ping-Pong for a Purpose—The annual competition was won by Shareholders Tony Ashley (Chicago) and Hoyoon Nam (New York). Donations were made to St. Jude Children's Hospital, Tunnels to Towers Foundation, St. Jude Children's Hospital, Save the Children and Partners in Learning, Inc., respectively.

Chicago Cornhole Tournament—Chief Financial Officer Juan Cruz won the VedderCares Cornhole Tournament, resulting in a donation to the Wounded Warriors Project.

Cutest Pet Competition—Our 2024 competition had two brackets: The dog category was won by Rizzo, Associate Kelly Miller's dog, with a donation made to the Special Olympics. In the cat category, the winner was Willem, Recruiting staff member Valerie Walter's cat, with a donation made to the Anti-Cruelty Society.

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS IN 2024

Firmwide Food Drive—Each of our offices collected nonperishable goods and donations to provide meals and necessities for underserved individuals within their respective communities. Our receiving charities included the Greater Chicago Food Depository (Chicago), North Texas Food Bank (Dallas), Euston Food Bank (London), Hollywood Food Coalition (Los Angeles), Curley's House (Miami), City Harvest (New York), SF-Marin Food Bank (San Francisco), Food from the Heart (Singapore) and SOME, (So Others Might Eat) (Washington DC).

Community Service Days—Vedder Price hosted Rise Against Hunger in our Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas, New York and Washington, DC offices, packaging thousands of free meals. The Miami and San Francisco offices made donations to Project Helping, an organization dedicated to improving mental health through volunteering. At the global level, the Singapore office to the Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA), while the London office made a donation to The Food Bank Aid.

School Supply Drives—U.S. offices participated to benefit local schools and organizations: Chicago (Cradles to Crayons), Dallas (Community Partners of Dallas), Los Angeles (McKinley Elementary), New York (PS310 Marble School), Miami (The Education Fund), San Francisco (Tenderloin Community Elementary School) and Washington, DC (Thomson Elementary).

Soldiers' Angels—U.S. offices made homemade ornaments for VA hospitals and for deployed service members.

Spreading Holiday Cheer—U.S. and global offices participated in gift drives benefitting local charities within their community.



Members of Our Pro Bono Committee

The Vedder Price Pro Bono Committee, which meets bimonthly, oversees the firm's activities, and works to develop relationships with pro bono agencies throughout the world. Michelle Olson and Patrick Spangler co-chair our committee, which includes the following:

Co-Chairs:



Michelle T. Olson
Shareholder
+1 (312) 609 7569
molson@vedderprice.com



Patrick W. Spangler
Shareholder
+1 (312) 609 7797
pspangler@vedderprice.com

Members:



Courtney M. Brown
Associate
+1 (212) 407 7647
cmbrown@vedderprice.com



Jonathan Edgelow
Counsel
+44 (0)20 3667 2925
jedgelow@vedderprice.com



Danielle Meltzer Cassel
Shareholder
+1 (312) 609 7962
dcassel@vedderprice.com



Arianna Goodman
Shareholder
+1 (469) 895 4780
agoodman@vedderprice.com



Mark J. Ditto
Shareholder
+1 (312) 609 7643
mditto@vedderprice.com



Nusra Ismail
Associate
+1 (312) 609 7892
nismail@vedderprice.com



Joshua A. Dunn
Shareholder
+1 (212) 407 7791
jdunn@vedderprice.com



Jonathan C. Maude
Partner
+44 (0)20 3667 2860
jmaude@vedderprice.com



Rachel Easton
Associate
+1 44(0) 20 3667 2923
reaston@vedderprice.com



Taylor A. McCann
Associate
+1 (212) 407 7717
tmccann@vedderprice.com

Continued:



Shelby E. Parnes
Shareholder
+1 (312) 609 7598
sparnes@vedderprice.com



Cheryl A. Sabnis
Shareholder
+1 (415) 749 9510
csabnis@vedderprice.com



Anand V. Ramana
Shareholder
+1 (202) 312 3325
aramana@vedderprice.com



Michael A. Wahlander
Shareholder
+1 (415) 749 9540
mwahlander@vedderprice.com



Simone M. Riley
Shareholder
+1 (212) 407 7720
sriley@vedderprice.com



Charlie Y. Wang
Associate
+1 (424) 204 7797
cwang@vedderprice.com

Ex-officio Member:



Laurel A. Dearborn
Chief Attorney Professional
Development Officer
+1 (312) 609 5077
ldearborn@vedderprice.com